

Rivers, Mendel
4. 2 General

Front / Edit / Other
 Page / Page / Page

CHARLESTON, S.C.
 NEWS & COURIER

M - 64,001

S - 82,608

FEB 23 1967

Rivers Backs CIA In Controversy

Charleston Congressman L. Mendel Rivers ripped into the executive department of the United States government last night for "not coming to the aid of the Central Intelligence Agency."

The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee told members of the Washington Light Infantry, at their annual banquet:

"Every President since 1952 has known what the CIA is doing. The enigma of this shameful affair is that the people who assign these dirty tasks of intelligence collection, do not stand behind the people

to whom the tasks are assigned."

He said the only defenders of the CIA in the present controversy over its payments to the National Student Assn. have been the House Armed Services committee of which he is chairman and individual congressmen.

"A lot of what the CIA is doing does not meet with my approval, but it is a rough job and should be defended," Rivers continued. "I know the images of both the agency and our country are being damaged around the world because of this."

Rivers addressed about 250 members of the WLI at their 160th annual banquet. He was introduced by Brig. Gen. C. E. Likes, former commander of the active company, C. B. First Battalion, 118th Infantry, South Carolina National Guard. The organization held memorial serv-

ices for its dead members last Sunday.

Touching a variety of subjects, Rivers re-emphasized his remarks of Tuesday night calling for a quick end to the war in Vietnam.

"I say this everywhere I go and will continue to say it," he commented.

Rivers read the group a letter he received from a crewman aboard the aircraft carrier Franklin D. Roosevelt when it stopped for provisions and fuel in Cape Town, South Africa recently. Because of that coun-

try's racial segregation policies, the Department of Defense canceled all shore leaves for ship personnel.

In the letter the crewman stated that he was heartbroken about the affair and had never been so ashamed of his country before.

Rivers has strongly criticized the Defense Department's decision in this incident.

Sgt. Charles Simonon was awarded the honor ring as the member of the active company judged the one who contributed most to the organization during the past year.